

April 17, 2010

WASHINGTON, DC -Today, U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) joined local business community, labor and government leaders to discuss the impact further high-speed rail investment would have on the Upstate New York economy with U.S. Rep. Corrine Brown, Chairwoman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Railroads. The Chairwoman's visit to Utica was one of only two stops in New York State during a "Whistle Stop Tour" to highlight Recovery Bill funding for high speed rail across the country.

Arcuri met Chairwoman Brown at the Capital District Transportation Authority Rensselaer Train Station outside of Albany, NY to board an Amtrak train bound for Utica's Union Station where the listening session was held.

"High speed rail represents the Erie Canal-like vision that can rebuild the Upstate New York economy," **said Arcuri**. "It was really an honor to be able to join local business, labor and government leaders to discuss how further investment in this cutting edge transportation infrastructure would create jobs and lead to future business development opportunities in our region with someone as influential and knowledgeable about rail as Chairwoman Brown. For decades, people have been talking about the benefits of bringing high speed rail to Upstate New York. I am proud to say we have stopped the talking and started the doing."

"This listening session was really helpful to me, and I will share what I learned today with other Members of the Transportation Committee," **said House Railroad Subcommittee**

Chairwoman Corrine Brown.

"The people I spoke with today -- area business owners, labor leaders, and government representatives - have great insight into how the development of high-speed rail can play a significant role in the recovery of the local economy and revitalization of business opportunities here in Upstate New York. The enthusiasm for the development of high-speed rail has been growing nationwide, and I am grateful to everyone who spent time with me today to share their thoughts."

"The significance of today's event underscores just how important rail is to our future, and that Upstate is primed and ready for economic development and the jobs that high-speed rail can bring," **said New York State Department of Transportation Utica Regional Director Michael Shamma**. "The \$151 million in Recovery Act funds that New York received will bring

immediate improvements to rail service by addressing critical bottlenecks that affect on-time performance of Amtrak trains across the State, to say nothing of the jobs these projects will create, both in construction and in future economic development."

"I'm excited about this and all that it will bring," **said Mohawk Valley Building & Construction Trades Council President Pat Costello.** "I'm interested in seeing how or if they will utilize local workers with rail and the construction that will follow it."

"First and foremost, we need reliable rail service, and if high-speed helps us get there, then I am all for it," **said Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Mohawk Valley Chamber of Commerce Elis DeLia** .

Arcuri recently met with U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood to advocate for additional funding for high speed rail projects in Central New York and the Mohawk Valley as part of an additional \$2.5 billion included for high speed rail development nationwide through the Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Consolidated Appropriations act signed into law last December. This would be in addition to the \$1 million specifically designated for improvements at railroad crossings in Oneida County and \$151 million dollars in Recovery Bill funding received for improvements to New York's Empire Corridor, which stretches from Niagara Falls to Albany.

Congresswoman Brown of Florida has been a member of the Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure since coming to Congress. In 2007, Brown was selected as Chair of the House Transportation Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials. In the 111th Congress, the Chairwoman's priorities for the Subcommittee are focused on implementation of both the passenger rail legislation enacted in 2008, as well as reauthorizing the Surface Transportation Board, funding rail infrastructure improvements across the nation, and developing high-speed rail.

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